SCREENING FORM FOR LOW-EFFECT HCP DETERMINATIONS

Lockheed Martin Corporation Contaminant Investigations HCP
Beaumont Potrero Creek and Beaumont Laborde Canyon Properties, Riverside County, California

I. Project Information

A. Project name:

Lockheed Martin Corporation (applicant) Contaminant Investigations at Potrero Creek (Site 1) and Laborde Canyon (Site 2) properties.

B. Affected species:

Stephens' kangaroo rat (*Dipodomys stephensi*, "SKR")

C. Project size (in acres):

The total acreage of both sites is 11,785 acres, but the affected area is estimated to be less than three (3) acres total.

D. Brief project description including minimization and mitigation plans:

The applicant seeks to conduct the following contamination investigation activities at Sites 1 and 2. These activities are required as part of a California Department of Toxic Control (DTSC) consent order:

1. Conduct quarterly groundwater level measurements, sampling, and repair at groundwater wells in Sites 1 and 2;

2. Install and develop up to 50 additional groundwater wells (4-inch diameter) as needed at Sites 1 and 2 for groundwater sampling and monitoring, and performing pilot studies;

3. Abandon approximately 20 groundwater wells (production and monitoring) at Sites 1 and 2, which may require excavating the top five feet of soil to cut the well casing;

4. Perform routine maintenance of existing structures at both sites and groundwater treatment system at Site 1;

5. Maintain roads (*e.g.*, repair, limited grading, widening and create new routes if necessary) at Sites 1 and 2;

6. Mark, survey (geophysical), and drill approximately 400 soil assessment boreholes (8-inch diameter) for collection of soil samples for contaminant and geotechnical analysis at Sites 1 and 2;

7. Install and sample up to 200 temporary soil gas probes at selected borehole locations at Sites 1 and 2 for soil gas characterization;

8. Remove inactive catalytic oxidizer (CatOx) unit at Site 1 using a front loader and/or crane to lift components onto transport vehicles for offsite disposal;

9. Deposit non-hazardous soils from drilling, excavation, and road maintenance activities onsite;

10. Mow work areas by hand operated equipment or small tractor;

11. Survey the locations/boundaries of investigation activities (boreholes, wells, excavations, etc.) at Sites 1 and 2 using land-based surveying equipment or GPS technology;

12. Perform unexploded ordnance (UXO) surveys in selected historical, ballistics testing areas at Site 1 using electromagnetic conductivity equipment either drawn by hand or an all-terrain vehicle, and attain surficial exposure of anomalies by hand for visual inspection; and

13. Conduct seismic reflection surveys at Sites 1 and 2 that consist of placing sensors at 10 to 15 foot intervals along seismic test lines (typically 700 to 800ft in length) and dropping a weight on a metal plate approximately 10 times, at 30 second intervals, at each sensors location.

While these activities will be conducted over the course of approximately five (5) years (*e.g..*, water well sampling will be done semiannually), any individual activity will be of very short duration, usually less than one day (*e.g.*, well or bore hole drilling, removal of CatOx unit, water sampling). These investigation activities are the only activities covered by this HCP. Once the extent of contamination and any necessary remediation are determined through this investigation, remediation that may affect listed species will be addressed separately from this HCP through the regulatory process appropriate for that remediation.

Avoidance and minimization measures related to the SKR for the contaminant investigations include:

1. A permitted SKR biologist or subpermittee (biological monitor) will perform pre-activity surveys to identify the location of SKR habitat and active burrows;
2. All activities will be completed during daylight hours;
3. All activities will be supervised by a biological monitor or biologist with knowledge of SKR biology and ecology;

4. An orientation program about SKR and avoidance and minimization measures will be provided to project workers during tailgate safety meetings;
5. Burrows will be flagged to aid workers in burrow avoidance and the flags will be removed when the task is completed;
6. All equipment will be guided by the biologist to avoid active SKR burrows as much as possible using the following priority for establishing the route: 1) the existing road network; 2) existing tracks, trails, or areas with compacted soils; 3) existing bare areas; or 4) if off-road, the shortest route having the least amount of native vegetation and the smallest number of active SKR burrows;
7. All off road vehicle or equipment traffic will be limited to the same path in and out, move slowly, and will be turned in gentle arching motions to minimize impacts to the ground surface;
8. Mower blades will be elevated 4 to 6 inches above the ground surface and be limited to the smallest area possible to protect burrow sites;
9. In establishing parking and staging areas, the biological monitor will select the parking and/or staging area using the following priority: 1) the existing road network; 2) existing tracks, trails or areas with compacted soils; 3) existing bare areas; or 4) if off-road, the area that has the least amount of native vegetation and the smallest number of active SKR burrows;
10. If burrows are present in a parking or staging area, large sheets of metal or plywood will be placed under the vehicles and/or equipment to spread the weight and will be removed following use;
11. Parking of vehicles and staging of equipment overnight will be restricted to existing roads;
12. Drilling/boring will be restricted, to the maximum extent possible, to 15 feet or more from active SKR burrows;
13. If burrows cannot be avoided, load-spreading measures will be placed over the burrows for vehicles and/or equipment setup and movement; and
14. If more than load-spreading measures are required to avoid a significant amount of take (*e.g.*, during well abandonment and road repair), then trapping will be performed by a permitted biologist. Trapping will consist of the following tasks: 1) The area of potential impact will be temporarily fenced using a 2-foot high plastic wood-staked soil erosion fence buried 12 inches deep, fencing will be removed after activities possibly resulting in take are completed; 2) SKR live-trapping will be conducted within the impact area 3-5 days prior to the disturbance activity and all SKR trapped will be held in clean ventilated terrarium containers; 3) all SKR will be released at their capture site the evening after the activity is completed, but no SKR will be held any longer than 7 days. If the original burrows were destroyed by the activity, new burrows will be drilled into a suitable area within 100 feet of the trap location

prior to the release of the SKR; and 4) to the maximum extent practicable, SKR trapped will be immediately released to the habitat adjacent to the excluded area, if suitable habitat to support SKR exists. This will remove the possibility of take from holding the animal(s) in a terrarium.

Mitigation will consist of refilling boreholes, smoothing of soils disturbed during investigation activities. Due to the very small individual footprints of these activities, no additional mitigation measures are proposed or deemed necessary.

II. Does the HCP fit the low-effect criteria in the HCP Handbook? *The answer must be "yes" to all three questions below for a positive determination. Each response should include an explanation.*

A. Are the effects of the HCP minor or negligible on federally listed, proposed, or candidate species and their habitats covered under the HCP prior to implementation of the mitigation plan? (Handbook pg. 1-8 and 1-9) *In making this determination, actions undertaken by the applicant to avoid "take" are not considered mitigation.*

Yes. The proposed investigation activities lay within an area occupied by SKR and may result in some impacts to SKR either by habitat modification, harassment, or harm. However, these impacts are considered to be negligible because: 1) the impacts to the habitat will be from mowing and minor ground disturbance from drilling of additional wells and soil bore sampling and blading of temporary roads; 2) harassment impacts may include disturbing SKR in their burrows because of drilling noise and vibrations, causing possible injury to the animal; 3) the expected level of harm (injury or death) is anticipated to be low because the likelihood of the drill hitting an individual SKR within its burrow and injury or death from displacement from the burrow is very low; and 4) take level from trapping effects, which may not be needed, is anticipated to be very low. Modifications to SKR habitat are minor and the impacts to the species are low to negligible. The project will not affect any proposed or candidate species or their habitats. SKR habitat may be improved in the future based on the results of this contaminant investigation.

B. Are the effects of the HCP minor or negligible on other environmental values or resources (e.g. air quality, geology and soils, water quality and quantity, socio-economic, cultural resources, recreation, visual resources, etc.) prior to implementation of the mitigation plan? (Handbook pg. 1-8 and 1-9) *In making this determination, actions undertaken by the applicant to avoid "take" are not considered mitigation.*

Yes. Because of the small size of the actual footprint and limited duration of the project, emissions from project-related activities would be localized and limited to short periods of time, thus air quality would not be significantly impacted.

Impacts to the geology of the area are anticipated to be minor because negative impacts to the soil would be of short duration and the ground will be restored to pre-disturbance condition.

Water quality of the area will not be negatively impacted since only test wells will be installed. Results from this contaminants investigation may be used to improve groundwater in the area through determining remediation actions that may be necessary in the future.

No major changes in land use or the socio-economic environment are expected to occur as a result of implementing the HCP

No known cultural sites exist on the sites; therefore, no impacts to cultural resources are anticipated.

There are no legal recreation activities allowed on the project sites; therefore, no impacts to recreational activities are anticipated.

Visual resources of the area will not be affected due to the temporary nature of the disturbance and the isolation of the project sites.

C. Would the impacts of this HCP, considered together with the impacts of other past, present and reasonably foreseeable similarly situated projects <u>not</u> result, over time, in cumulative effects to environmental values or resources which would be considered significant? (Handbook pg. 5-3). *The same concept is also included in the exception to categorical exclusions, III. F. below.*

No significant cumulative effects are expected to occur since this type of contaminant investigation is not anticipated to be repeated multiple times in the future in the distribution of the species. Also, few to no low-effect HCPs are anticipated in Western Riverside County due to the existence of the SKR Long-Term HCP and the Western Riverside County Multiple Species HCP, both of which cover development impacts to and conservation of SKR in Western Riverside County. The information gained by implementation of this proposed low-effect HCP will be used to determine remediation activities deemed necessary that may enhance SKR habitat through the clean up of groundwater and soil at both sites.

III. Do any of the exceptions to categorical exclusions apply to this HCP? (from 516 DM 2.3, Appendix 2) *If the answer is "yes" to any of the questions below, the project can not be categorically excluded from NEPA. Each "no" response should include an explanation.*

Would implementation of the HCP:

A. Have significant adverse effects on public health or safety?

No. The area affected by the project is small, and the negligible impacts to resources such as air and water quality are not likely to result in impacts to public health or safety. These proposed activities are part of a DTSC consent order to clean up the sites. The completion of these activities is an integral step in abiding by this consent order and will provide information that would expedite future remediation of the groundwater and soil deemed necessary that may ultimately improve public health and safety. This low-effect HCP covers only the contaminants investigation and not any future clean up activities.

B. Have adverse effects on such unique geographic characteristics as historic or cultural resources, park, recreation or refuge lands, wilderness areas, wild or scenic rivers, sole or principal drinking water aquifers, prime farmlands, wetlands, floodplains, or ecologically significant or critical areas, including those listed on the Department's National Register of Natural Landmarks?

No. There are no known cultural resources, registered National Landmarks, sole or principal drinking water aquifers, wilderness areas, prime farmlands, or wild scenic rivers within the HCP project area or immediately adjacent to it; therefore, these areas would not be affected by the HCP. The proposed activities will be conducted on lands which in the future will be used for recreation and/or refuge lands; however, the information from this investigation may ultimately benefit the entire ecosystem of the project sites and surrounding areas by directing further clean up and habitat restoration activities. Although wetlands and stream channels are in the area, these resources would not be affected because the ground disturbing activities would not be conducted in these areas.

C. Have highly controversial environmental effects?

No. The project activities will have negligible impacts, and therefore, issuance of the permit would not involve controversial environmental effects. These activities will lead to information that may be used in the future to improve the environment and habitat for SKR.

D. Have highly uncertain and potentially significant environmental effects or involve unique or unknown environmental risks?

No. These investigation activities do not pose highly uncertain and potentially significant environmental effects or involve unique or unknown environmental risks. The short-time duration of each activity and small disturbance footprint all contribute to precluding unknown risks.

E. Establish a precedent for future action or represent a decision in principle about future actions with potentially significant environmental effects?

No. The project activities have negligible impacts and the issuance of the permit would not establish a precedent for future actions or represent a decision in principle about future actions with potentially significant environmental effects. Future actions would be reviewed on their own merits.

F. Be directly related to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant environmental effects?

No. Further contaminant investigation of the property is not anticipated. The information from this project will be used to determine any necessary contaminant remediation, since the future use of the area will be for recreation and habitat conservation. Any activities undertaken in the future are anticipated to be a benefit to recreation and habitat conservation, and therefore, there will not be cumulatively significant negative environmental effects.

G. Have adverse effects on properties listed or eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places?

No. There are no properties listed or eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places in the area.

H. Have adverse effects on listed or proposed species, or have adverse effects on designated Critical Habitat for these species? *Consider the degree or amount of take and the impact of the take on the species. Although take may occur under project implementation, it may be so minor as to result in negligible effects. The same concept applies when considering effects to critical habitat.*

No. Although adverse effects to SKR may occur in the form of habitat modification, harassment, or harm, the impacts associated with these effects are negligible or minor to the species. No critical habitat has been designated or proposed for SKR; therefore, none will be affected.

I. Have adverse effects on wetlands, floodplains or be considered a water development project thus requiring compliance with either Executive Order 11988 (Floodplain Management), Executive Order 11990 (Protection of Wetlands), or the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act?

No. The project will not impact wetlands or floodplains and thus not require compliance with either Executive Order 11988 (Floodplain Management), Executive Order 11990 (Protection of Wetlands), or the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act.

J. Threaten to violate a Federal, State, local or tribal law or requirement imposed for the protection of the environment?

No. Implementation of the project does not threaten to violate any Federal, State, local or tribal law or requirement imposed for the protection of the environment. All other Federal and State regulations shall be adhered to.

IV. ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION STATEMENT

Based on the analysis above, the Lockheed Martin Corporation Contaminant Investigations HCP qualifies as a "Low Effect" HCP as defined in the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service *Habitat Conservation Planning Handbook.* Therefore, this action is categorically excluded from further NEPA documentation as provided by 516 DM 2, Appendix 1 and 516 DM 6, Appendix 1.

Concurrence:

_____ _____

(1) Field Supervisor Date
Carlsbad Fish and Wildlife Office

_____ _____

(2) Assistant Manager, Ecological Services Date
California/Nevada Operations Office